

REMARKS

I. Amendments. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §101 and §112

A. Rejections under §101

The Examiner rejected claims 1-28, 47-50, and 60-66 under 35 U.S.C. §101 on the grounds that the claim language allegedly does not transform the underlying subject matter and the process is not tied to another statutory class.

Applicants have amended claims 1, 47, and 60 in the manner as proposed by the Examiner to recite that particular steps in the claimed methods are performed *by a computer or using a computer*. These claims are now tied to a computer and therefore are directed to statutory subject matter.

In view of the claim amendments, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection under §101.

B. Rejections under §112

The Examiner rejected claims 1-66 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. The Examiner generally alleges that the first step of claims 1, 29, 47, 51, and 60, wherein the first step recites that the central inventory system is configured for maintaining a single repository of data, is unclear, and that there is no discussion of these recited features in later steps of these claims.

Applicants have amended claims 1, 29, 47, 51, and 60 to clarify specific portions of these claims which were cited by the Examiner in the Office Action.

Applicants also submit that there is no justification for the Examiner's rejection of these claims on the grounds that particular features recited in one step of a claim are not subsequently repeated in later steps of the claim. It would make the claims unduly cumbersome if they were to repeat each and every feature of a previously-recited claim element in each step of a claim.

In the pending claims, the central inventory system is described with specificity in the first step of the respective claims, and the central inventory system is referred to in later steps of the claims. For example, in claim 1, the central inventory system is introduced in step (a), and is referred to in subsequent steps (c) and (d). Applicants submit that they have properly introduced the relevant elements in their claims, and that the respective elements are referred to in later steps as appropriate. To do otherwise would make the claims unnecessarily complex and verbose.

In view of the claim amendments and remarks herein, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections under §112.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

A. Geoghegan

Claims 29-46, 51-59, and 60-66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over US 7,328,166 to Geoghegan et al. (“Geoghegan”). The Examiner alleges that Geoghegan discloses a hospitality management computer system for providing quotes associated with facilities of geographically distributed business entities of a hospitality organization. The Examiner alleges that Geoghegan discloses “a data storage system configures as a single repository for storage and retrieval of all data with booking ... entities”, and that it would have been obvious to maintain databases in a plurality of databases or different storages (sic) in order to improve redundancy or to combine all information into a single database for the convenience of accessing information. Consequently, the Examiner concludes that the pending claims are an obvious variation of Geoghegan.

Applicants disagree with the Examiner’s rationale for the rejection.

1. Geoghegan does not disclose a single centralized inventory repository as claimed.

The Examiner alleges that Geoghegan discloses a single database or central inventory repository as a single view or one view of an inventory system which includes the booking sources (Office Action, page 20, paragraph 6(2)).

Applicants disagree with the Examiner’s allegations, and rely on their remarks of record in their Amendment filed on March 11, 2009 to distinguish the pending claims over Geoghegan.

As recommended by the Examiner in the Office Action, Applicants have also amended the claims to recite that the claimed system comprises a single back-end repository of pricing and booking data, and that the system receives requests for bookings via single central interface. Support for these amendments is provided by paragraphs [0016], [0041] and [0044] of the specification as originally filed.

As acknowledged by the Examiner, Geoghegan discloses a reservation system and methodology in which all changes to a database in a federation are communicated to all of the other databases in the federation (Abstract; and col. 4, lines 45-56). Geoghegan is directed to

using pre-existing systems within the federation in order to leverage existing structures and hardware. Geoghegan utilizes “wrappers” that provide “facades” so that the databases in the federation appear to provide a single view of inventory to the end-user (col. 5, lines 20-25; and 43-47). Although these wrappers provide the appearance of a single view of inventory to the end user, the underlying architecture is still structured as a federation of a plurality of databases.

In contrast to Geoghegan, the pending claims have been amended to clearly recite that Applicants’ centralized inventory system is configured as a single back-end repository of pricing and booking data related to the facilities of any of the business entities of the hospitality organization (para. [0014]). Users obtain access to the hospitality management system via different kinds of distribution channels, such as call reservation systems, on-line merchants, and walk-ins, which are connected to the central interface of the system.

Consequently, Applicants’ claims provide a single “front end” providing a unified interface to the user, and a single “back end” which utilizes one data repository for (a) storage of all the data required for providing price quotes and taking reservations, and (b) an allocation logic module for revenue optimization. Geoghegan does not disclose or suggest a single, unified front end interface, and a single back end for data storage.

2. Geoghegan teaches away from the pending claims.

The Examiner alleges that the feature that the central inventory system is configured as one or more repositories is not essential to the invention. The Examiner alleges that it would have been obvious to maintain data in a plurality of databases in order to improve redundancy in case of failure *or* (emphasis in original) to combine all information into a single database for the convenience of accessing information (Office Action, page 21).

Applicants reply that the Examiner has interpreted Geoghegan in a manner inconsistent with the document. As discussed by Applicants in their earlier Amendment, Geoghegan states that there are two ways to achieve a satisfactory view of inventory (col. 4, lines 44-56). Under the first scenario, one can construct a scenario in which all availability queries are delegated to a single source of availability information. In the second scenario, one can take steps to ensure that all changes to a database in a federation are reliably communicated to the other databases in the federation.

Geoghegan states that the first scenario requires modifications to the behavior of products comprising the installed base of global distribution systems, property management systems, and central reservation systems, and **therefore is not realistic** (emphasis added). Geoghegan therefore takes the latter approach of utilizing a federation of databases (col. 4, lines 44-56).

Applicants have taken the first approach of utilizing a single database forming the central inventory system. The Examiner's allegation that the two approaches are equally valid is contrary and repugnant to Geoghegan's clear statement that a single database approach is unsatisfactory and unrealistic. It is only with the benefit of hindsight that the Examiner can reconstruct the pending claims, and furthermore only by using an incorrect and inaccurate view of Geoghegan.

Accordingly, Applicants repeat that the pending claims are not an obvious variation of Geoghegan, and request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of the claims under §103(a).

B. Geoghegan in view of Patullo

Claims 1-28 and 47-50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Geoghegan alone or further in view of US 2005/0033613 to Patullo et al. ("Patullo").

Applicants submit that the comments in Section A, above, regarding the rejection of claims 29-46, 51-59, and 60-66 in view of Geoghegan alone, are applicable and therefore responsive to the rejection of Geoghegan alone or in further view of Patullo. In brief, Geoghegan does not disclose the claimed subject matter, and furthermore teaches away from Applicants' approach of utilizing a single hospitality database for pricing and booking of facilities. Consequently, Geoghegan cannot suggest Applicants' claims.

Applicants submit that Patullo does not remedy the deficiencies of Geoghegan to suggest the pending claims, and rely on their remarks of record in distinguishing the claims over Patullo.

Patullo is directed to a reservation system for making travel arrangements via a computer network (Abstract). Patullo discloses that the reservation system comprises various hardware, including a web server **110**, a flight data server **130**, resort/airfare database **120**, and a central reservation system **150** (para. [0048]). A duplicate of the data stored in the central reservation system is also stored in the resort/airfare database (para. [0050]).

Applicants submit this disclosure of a plurality of databases is cumulative to Geoghegan's disclosure of a federation of databases. Applicants also submit that the duplication of data between the central reservation system and the resort/airfare database is cumulative to Geoghegan's disclosure of changes in one database being propagated to all the other databases in the federation.

Consequently, neither Geoghegan nor Patullo, whether taken alone or in combination, suggests the claimed invention, and the Examiner has not established a *prima facie* case of obviousness. Applicants request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

III. Conclusion

Applicants submit that the pending claims have been distinguished over the art of record and are in condition for allowance, which action is urgently requested. Applicants' undersigned Agent requests the courtesy of a telephone call from the Examiner if he believes that such a discussion would advance the status of the application.

Authorization is hereby given to charge any fee which may be due in connection with this communication to Deposit Account 23-1703.

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Respectfully submitted,

/Andrew Fessak/

Andrew Fessak, Reg. No. 48,528

Customer Number: 007470

Direct Dial: (212) 819-8437